

## Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 INRE-00 USIE-00  
SSO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SS-15 /040 W  
-----029000 171016Z /11

O P 170930Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1797  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 0424

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF VN  
SUBJECT: REPORTED DROWNING OF VIETNAMESE BOAT REFUGEES

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 0339

1. AS INDICATED PARA 4, REFTEL, EMBASSY REFUGEE OFFICER  
HAS INVESTIGATED CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING SINKING OF  
VIETNAMESE REFUGEE BOAT AND REPORTED DROWNING OF NINE REFUGEES.

2. BOAT FIRST LANDED ON MALAYSIAN COAST NIGHT OF 7 JANUARY  
36 MILES NORTH OF TRENGGANU. LOCAL AUTHORITIES INNOCULATED  
15 PEOPLE ABOARD FOR SMALLPOX, FURNISHED PROVISIONS AND TOLD  
THEM TO LEAVE. BOAT LANDED AT TRENGGANU ON 10 JANUARY.  
POLICE ORDERED BOAT TO LEAVE. REFUGEES RESPONDED THAT THEY  
HAD NO FOOD OR WATER AND BOATS ENGINE INOPERABLE. BOAT  
ALLOWED TO ANCHOR IN ESTUARY CLOSE TO LOCAL MARKET. BOAT  
REMAINED AT ANCHOR THROUGH 11 JANUARY. POLICE RECORDED  
NAMES OF REFUGEES AND GAVE FOOD AND MILK TO REFUGEES.  
IN EARLY HOURS OF JANUARY 12 A VOILENT STORM AROSE  
WHICH SNAPPED ANCHOR CABLE AND BLEW BOAT INTO MIDDLE

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OF RIVER WHERE IT BROKE UP AND SANK. NINE REFUGEES  
DROWNED. SIX SURVIVORS GIVEN IMMEDIATE CARE BY POLICE.  
BODIES RECOVERED FOLLOWING DAY AND GIVEN DECENT BURIAL.  
SURVIVORS GIVEN CLOTHES AND MOVE TO PULAU BESAR  
REFUGEE CAMP.

3. SURVIVOR WHO RELATED ABOVE FACTS TO REFUGEE OFFICER

ASKED THAT CHIEF OF POLICE BE THANKED FOR HIS KINDNESS. SIX SURVIVORS BEING INTERVIEWED BY INS FOR ENTRY AS CAT IV REFUGEES UNDER IPP-77.

4. COMMENT. REFUGEE OFFICER REPORTS IT APPEARS THAT REFUGEES WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LAND. FIRST REPORTS OF INCIDENT AS RELAYED REFTEL GAVE RISE TO SUSPICION THAT DROWNINGS WERE DUE TO REJECTION OF BOAT, BUT THIS APPARENTLY WAS NOT THE CASE. THERE ARE CONTINUING REPORTS THAT MALAYSIANS HAVE TURNED AWAY SOME SEAWORTHY BOATS, AND THEY CLEARLY PREFER THAT REFUGEES GO ELSEWHERE. THEY NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO ACCEPT REFUGEES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO CANNOT GO ON, AND TO TREAT THEM HUMANELY.

MILLER

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** REPORTED DROWNING OF VIETNAMESE BOAT REFUGEES  
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